

PUBLIC SURVEY TO DETERMINE COUNTY POTENTIALS

To provide further insight into Wayne County's economic potentials for growth, the Wayne County Planning Board decided to take the matter to the people in the county, particularly those most concerned with guiding the county's future. Hopefully, a representative cross-section of the business and industrial leaders were sampled. The following paragraphs summarize the information obtained by personal interviews with these local leaders.

For the agricultural industry, the shortage of farm labor was considered the most pressing problem at this time. New manufacturing industries in the county have both helped and hindered the average farmer. Manufacturing normally pays higher wages, causing farmers to increase their wages. Also, many people who have worked as seasonal labor for the farms have now gone to a manufacturing job full-time, thus causing the scarce farm labor supply. But, new manufacturing plants bring in new people. This provides some summer farm employment for their children and also creates more demand for some of the farmers' products. The dairying farms have been helped greatly.

Most people felt that farm incomes would increase over the next twenty years at a growth rate of about five percent per year. They felt that "opportunity would knock", but more money must be made available for the necessary mechanization of farming methods, which are not readily available today. Most also felt that less dependence should be placed on tobacco as the principal cash crop and more diversification, particularly in food production, of agriculture would be needed in the future. It was also suggested that there was a need for more efficiency in production. Livestock and poultry production opportunities have increased and these are the areas where most farmers have the necessary facilities. A little time and a small investment would provide many